Remarks

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitation of claim 3 that, in response to a request to commit a message to the queue, the list entry key associated with the list entry is modified to fall within the committed key range to move the list entry to the committed portion of the list. Claim 3 has been cancelled, while claims 4 and 6, formerly dependent on claim 3, have been amended to depend on claim 1.

In a similar manner, apparatus claim 13 has been amended to include the corresponding limitation of claim 14, while claim 14 has been cancelled and claims 15 and 16 amended to depend on claim 13. Finally, program storage device claim 20 has been amended to include the corresponding limitation of claim 21, while claim 21 has been cancelled and claims 22 and 23 amended to depend on claim 13.

Claims 1-26 as previously presented stand rejected as being unpatentable over Leymann et al. (EP 0 817 019 A2) ("Leymann") in view of Denny et al. (US 6,330,686 B1) ("Denny") (paper no. 8, page 2). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As has previously been noted, in applicants claimed invention, each list entry, corresponding to a message in a queue, has a key that determines whether the list entry is in an uncommitted portion or a committed portion of the list. This allows a message to be committed to the queue merely by modifying the associated list entry key to fall within a committed key range, moving the list entry to the committed portion of the list.

With respect to previously presented claims 3, 14 and 21 (the limitations of which are now incorporated into claims 1, 13 and 20), the Examiner has argued in effect that Leymann teaches applicants' claimed combination except for the step of adding a list entry, that Denny teaches this latter step, and that it would have been obvious to combine the two references to obtain the claimed combination (paper no. 8, ¶¶ 4 and 6). Since, however, neither reference teaches what it is claimed to teach, whether it would have been obvious to combine the two references is irrelevant.

Leymann discloses a method of extended transaction processing in which messages are moved between a first queue 505 (Fig. 5) and a second queue 506 in a transaction 502 that is part of a chained transaction. In contrast to applicants' claimed system, though, there is no teaching of using keys in any manner to identify queue entries, much less using keys to determine whether a given entry is in an uncommitted or a committed portion of a queue.

Nor does Leymann teach the step of modifying a list entry key to fall within a committed key range in response to a commit request as claimed by applicants. The Examiner has previously identified the passage at column 10, lines 47-54 as teaching this step (paper no. 8, ¶ 6). However, this passage merely discusses transaction chaining and does not describe any particular mechanism for committing a transaction. Since there is no discussion of keys generally, there is certainly no discussion of using a key to indicate that an object is committed as claimed by applicants

The Examiner argues (in discussing claim 2) that Leymann's transaction identifier 203 (Fig. 2) is "analogous" to applicants' list entry key (paper no. 8, ¶ 5). However, even if the transaction identifier 203 were considered to function as a key, there is no teaching of using that transaction identifier to indicate whether a transaction is committed, as claimed by applicants. Rather, the clear implication is that such identifier, which is "unique" (col. 8, line 26), remains unchanged for the life of the transaction.

Denny is cited for its supposed teaching (at col. 8, lines 28-49) of the step of adding a list entry having a key within an uncommitted key range in response to a request to write a message to a queue. In fact, no such teaching appears, either in the indicated passage or anywhere else in the reference. While Denny discusses the commitment of objects as well as the movement of objects to various queues, the reference contains no discussion of keys at all, much less any discussion of using a key to indicate whether an object is committed as claimed by applicants.

Thus, neither of the cited references teaches what it is asserted to teach by the Examiner. Given this basic failing, the question of whether the references may be properly combined becomes irrelevant.
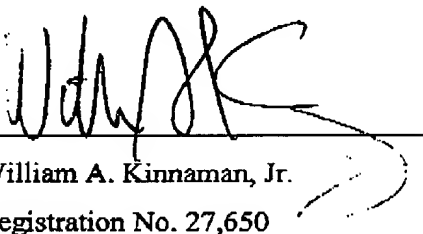
Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, as well as for the reasons stated in the previous amendment, applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 13 and 20 and the claims dependent thereon distinguish patentably over the art cited by the Examiner. Applicants therefore respectfully request entry of this amendment, reconsideration of the application as amended and, upon such consideration, a favorable action on the merits. Such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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